

PRESS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Divisions of Boating and Waterways, Historic Preservation and Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation

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Division of Boating and Waterways Offering Grants for Quagga and Zebra Mussel Infestation Prevention Programs

SACRAMENTO – California State Parks' Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) today announced the availability of grant funding to help prevent the further spread of quagga and zebra mussels into California's waterways. Funded by the California Mussel Fee Sticker (also known as the Quagga Sticker), the Quagga and Zebra (QZ) Mussel Infestation Prevention Grant Program expects to award up to \$2 million across eligible applicants. Applications open Monday, March 10, and must be received by **April 18, 2025, by 5 p.m. PDT**.

Grants are available to entities that own or manage any aspect of water in a reservoir that is open for public recreation and is mussel-free. If a reservoir is already covered by a two-year 2024 grant, that reservoir will not be considered during this application period. Funding is intended to augment local resources aimed at stopping the spread of these harmful invasive mussels. The funds must be used for prevention projects such as planning, watercraft inspection stations and inspectors, launch monitors, watercraft decontamination units, educational signage, and outreach.

To aid applicants through the requirements and application process, DBW will host a webinar on Thursday, March 13, where potential applicants can learn more about the application process and program. Information is posted at dbw.parks.ca.gov/QZGrant.

DBW will review and score applications in partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. DBW expects to notify applicants by July 2025, with grants starting in August 2025.

Since beginning in 2014, DBW's QZ Mussel Infestation Prevention Grant Program has awarded \$26.5 million in grants for 117 projects at 71 unique reservoirs. As a result of the collective efforts from all partners, the spread of quagga mussels has been slowed and limited to Southern California with two zebra mussel sightings in San Benito County.

While DBW recognizes prevention work for quagga and zebra mussels also prevents the spread of golden mussels (*Limnoperna fortunei*), the statutes and regulations governing the QZ Mussel Infestation Grant Program are specific to quagga mussels (*Dreissena rostriformis*

bugensis) and zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*). The ability to grant or deny a complete application is based on whether the applicant is preventing infestation of quagga and zebra mussels. Therefore, the grant program cannot fund activities that discuss the golden mussel for the 2025 grant cycle. Applications that discuss the golden mussel may be disqualified during the interagency review process.

To learn more about the QZ Mussel Infestation Prevention Grant Program and the upcoming webinar, please visit dbw.parks.ca.gov/QZGrant.

About Quagga and Zebra Mussels

Quagga and zebra (Dreissenid) mussels pose a serious threat to California's waters and fisheries. The spread of these freshwater mussels threatens recreational boating and fishing, aquatic ecosystems and fisheries, water delivery systems, hydroelectric facilities, agriculture, and the environment in general. To help stop the spread of these harmful invasive mussels, local, state and federal entities have increased watercraft inspections at California Department of Food and Agriculture Border Protection Stations; developed and implemented monitoring plans for high-risk waterbodies in the state; trained staff to conduct watercraft inspections and monitoring; executed public outreach campaigns to inform watercraft owners on the need for them to clean, drain and dry their boats when transporting between freshwater bodies; and provided grants.



Left: California Department of Fish and Wildlife environmental scientist with the Invasive Species Program performs a horizontal plankton tow, dragging a net through the water to obtain water samples for testing of the presence of juvenile quagga or zebra mussels. Photo courtesy of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Top Right: The services of mussel-sniffing dogs like Edna are funded with prevention grants. Photo courtesy of Sonoma Water. Bottom right: A quagga mussel-encrusted pipe. Photo courtesy of CDFW.

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